Bank assistance for the development of major ports in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the plans chalked out for the modernisation and expansion of the ports; and

(c) the expenditure likely to be spent on the modernisation and expansion of various ports in the country during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In the Annual Plan 1996-97 an amount of Rs. 576.60 crores has been allocated for the modernisation and expansion of major ports in the country.

Fundamentalist/Terrorist groups operating in India and abroad

*12. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are seized of reports that at least half a dozen fundamentalist and one and half dozen extremist groups from India and various other countries indulge in terrorist activities in India and elsewhere; and

(b) if so, Government's information about their numbers and modus operandi?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA); (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government is aware of various fundamentalist/extremist groups from India and various other countries indulging in terrorist activities in India; The modus operandi of these groups is to attack security forces, and soft targets by direct armed attacks, by laying ambushes or by use of explosive devices. They also resort to kidnapping & extortion etc. to achieve their ends, which are sometimes political in nature. These groups, especially foreign-based ones, also engage in providing refuge, shelter, guidance, coordination, supply of arms and explosives, logistic support, funding, recruitment and induction of their cadres into India. They are also engaged in propaganda and publicity, networking and forging links with other extremist groups and targeting the Indian interests. It would not be possible to specifically state the number of such outfits, since their numbers keep on changing with time and they vary in size from very small groups to major outfits and some of them are only paper outfits.

Private Sector participation in Communications

*13. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the areas permitted by Government to be given to private parties including multinationals, Non-Resident Indians and other foreigners;

(b) the details of the proposals received from such parties in various areas of communications;

(c) whether this policy fits into our concept of sovereignty of Parliamentary Democracy;

(d) if so, whether Government will have any control on the activities of these parties;

(e) if so, the provisions of law; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) The private parties including foreign companies and Non-Resident Indians are permitted in the areas of manufacture of telecom equipments and provision of telecom services. In the manufacturing sector the cases involving foreign equity upto 51% are approved on automatic basis by the Reserve Bank of India. Cases involving more than 51% foreign equity are considered on case to case basis by the Government. However, the participation of foreign companies in the Telecommunications service sector is permitted through joint ventures with Indian registered companies with limitation on foreign equity participation.